

CLAIMS

That which is claimed is:

1. A sole component for an article of footwear, the sole component comprising:
a bladder formed of a barrier material that encloses a fluid; and
a reinforcing structure at least partially recessed into the barrier material and bonded to the barrier material, the reinforcing structure extending through at least a sidewall of the bladder to restrict distension of the sidewall.
2. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the reinforcing structure has a first portion, a second portion, and a plurality of connecting portions extending between the first portion and the second portion.
3. The sole component recited in claim 2, wherein the first portion is secured to the bladder at an interface between a first surface and the sidewall, and the second portion is secured to the bladder at an interface between a second surface and the sidewall, the first surface being positioned opposite the second surface.
4. The sole component recited in claim 3, wherein the connecting portions are at least partially recessed into the sidewall and bonded to the sidewall.
5. The sole component recited in claim 3, wherein the first portion extends along a lateral side of the bladder, around a heel region of the bladder, and along a medial side of the bladder.
6. The sole component recited in claim 5, wherein at least one bridge member extends laterally across the bladder and connects opposite sides of the first portion.
7. The sole component recited in claim 3, wherein at least one of the connecting portions is inclined.
8. The sole component recited in claim 3, wherein a space between two adjacent connecting portions is positioned in a rear-lateral region of the sole structure.

9. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein a material forming the reinforcing structure has a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material.
10. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the reinforcing structure is formed of a first material and a different second material, each of the first material and the second material having a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material.
11. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the reinforcing structure includes extensions that extend outward from the bladder.
12. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the reinforcing structure includes vent apertures that release air from between the bladder and the reinforcing structure.
13. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the reinforcing structure extends between a first surface of the bladder and a second surface of the bladder only in a midfoot region and a heel region of the sole component.
14. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein the bladder is formed of a first barrier layer that forms a first surface and the sidewall, and the bladder is formed of a second barrier layer that forms a second surface that is opposite the first surface, the reinforcing structure being bonded only to the first barrier layer.
15. The sole component recited in claim 1, wherein edges of the reinforcing member are beveled.
16. A sole component for an article of footwear, the sole component comprising:
 - a bladder formed of a barrier material that encloses a pressurized fluid, the bladder having a first surface, an opposite second surface, and a sidewall extending between the first surface and the second surface; and
 - a reinforcing structure bonded to the bladder, the reinforcing structure including:

- a first portion positioned at an interface of the first surface and the sidewall, the first portion extending along a lateral side of the bladder, around a heel region of the bladder, and along a medial side of the bladder,
- a second portion spaced from the first portion and positioned at an interface of the second surface and the sidewall, the second portion extending along the lateral side, around the heel region, and along a medial side of the bladder, and
- a plurality of connecting portions extending along the sidewall and between the first portion and the second portion, the connecting portions being recessed into sidewall,

the reinforcing structure being formed of a material with a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material, and at least one of the connecting portion being in tension to restrict distension of the sidewall due to an outward force induced by the pressurized fluid.

17. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein at least one of the connecting portions is inclined.

18. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein spaces are formed between the connecting portions.

19. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein one of the spaces is positioned in a rear-lateral region of the sole component.

20. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein at least one bridge member extends laterally across the bladder and connects opposite sides of the first portion.

21. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein the material forming the reinforcing structure includes a first material and a different second material, each of the first material and the second material having a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material.

22. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein the reinforcing structure includes extensions that extend outward from the bladder.

23. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein the reinforcing structure includes vent apertures that release air from between the bladder and the reinforcing structure.

24. The sole component recited in claim 16, wherein edges of the reinforcing member are beveled.